



COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM
MINORITY STAFF
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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Summary

Bill to Establish an Independent Commission to Investigate Detainee Abuses

The legislation would establish an Independent Commission to investigate abuses of detainees in connection with Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom, or any operation within the Global War on Terrorism.

The Commission would examine:

- the extent of the abuses and why they occurred;
- who is responsible for the abuses;
- whether any particular executive branch policies, procedures, or mechanisms facilitated the abuses;
- what policies, procedures, or mechanisms failed to prevent the abuses;
- what legislative or executive actions should be taken to prevent such abuses from occurring in the future; and
- the extent, if any, to which Guantanamo Bay Detention Center policies influenced policies at the Abu Ghraib prison and other detention centers in and outside Iraq.

The Commission would be modeled after the 9/11 Commission. It would have ten bipartisan members. Following the model of the 9/11 Commission, half of the members would be appointed by the President and the majority leaders in the House and Senate and half by the minority leaders in the House and Senate.

The Commission would have authority to call hearings, obtain documents and testimony, issue subpoenas, and examine the actions of current and past Administrations. It would have access to classified information and would be able to hire staff with appropriate security clearances.

The Commission would submit a report to Congress and the President not later than 18 months after the bill's enactment that would findings, conclusions, and recommendations for corrective measures. The Commission may recommend that the House and Senate Intelligence Committees vote to declassify information the Commission determines is in the public interest to be made available to the public.